

THE SPIRITUAL ISSUES OF THE WAR

This bulletin is published for readers at home and abroad by the Religions Division of the Ministry of Information, London, to elucidate the spiritual issues at stake in the war, and to provide information concerning the British Churches in wartime, as well as their contribution to post-war reconstruction.

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CHRISTIAN MISSION ON WORLD ORDER

American Move for International Co-operation

The month of November was marked in America by an important effort organised by the Protestant Churches entitled "The Christian Mission on World Order." *The New York Times* of October 29th described it as "pleading for a new international order based upon the close political and economic collaboration of nations." The campaign was launched on October 28th at a meeting in the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, New York, attended by 5,000 people including many Church dignitaries and civic leaders.

The New York Times in describing the effort said that it concerned six major inter-denominational groups and its representatives were to visit 102 cities in 36 States during November, stressing the need for a post-war world based upon Christian principles. "This Mission," continued *The New York Times*, "consisting of seventy-five men and women in religion, education, government, law and other fields, will present before audiences and study groups a programme for international collaboration founded upon the Six Pillars of Peace proclaimed by the church organisations comprising the movement.

"These six pillars are an enduring international political organisation, economic and financial collaboration of national governments, provision for such changes in the future peace structure as may be required by changing conditions, autonomy for subject peoples with adequate provision for the realisation of this idea, procedures for controlling military establishments everywhere, and establishment of the right of individuals in all countries to religious and intellectual liberty.

"Supporting the Christian Mission and pledged to work for the realisation of this

peace programme are the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, the Foreign Missions Conference of North America, the Home Missions Council of North America, the International Council of Religious Education, the Missionary Education Movement, and the United Council of Church Women."

An address by Mr. Sumner Welles, former Under-Secretary of State, was read in his unavoidable absence at the opening service, and an address was given by Mr. John Foster Dulles, Chairman of the "Commission on a Just and Durable Peace."

At the conclusion of his speech Mr. Dulles said:

"There devolves on every citizen a personal responsibility to develop in himself the qualities which we want to be characteristic of our nation.

"When that has happened, our nation will again be a nation of vision. With that vision, we shall see a world in which most of humanity has been torn away from all established institutions. Almost everywhere a new society must be built. This is not only a calamity, it is an opportunity, the like of which men never saw before.

"We shall, as a nation, be comprehending. We shall hear the cry of multitudes that a way be found to save them and their children from the death, the misery, the starvation of body and soul which recurrent war and economic disorder now wreak upon man. We shall be so moved by that cry that we shall resolutely dedicate ourselves to find that way.

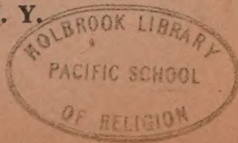
"We shall, as a nation, think out the way to advance our purpose. The broad principles which need to be incorporated into the new world are not obscure. They involve

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practices which are widely followed as between men who live in personal contact with each other. Such practices now need world-wide application, because the world has grown so small. Our Commission has set out these political principles as Six Pillars of Peace. Our statement has been widely accepted, both here and abroad and by church and secular groups. To devise political machinery to implement these principles presents no insoluble problem.

"Finally, we will act. We will not merely see the challenge, feel the sympathy, think out the way. We will act. We will embark, in company with others, on the next great adventure, that of building a fellowship that is world-wide in scope. Out of the perils, the difficulties, the accomplishments of that task will come again the joy that is reserved to those who seek here to create in God's image."

BISHOP OF DORNAKAL'S MESSAGE ON BRITISH RADIO

Sunday, November 28th, 1943, was kept as a day of special prayer for India in many British churches. At a B.B.C. service the following message from the Bishop of Dornakal, Dr. Azariah, was read:—

"My first word is a word of thanks to you for joining with me to-day in prayer for India. Prayer will overcome obstacles (for the Lord said that the obstacles arising out of the midnight hour, the indifference of the judge, the possession by the malicious spirit, can be overcome by importunate prayer, the prayer of faith).

"We are faced with obstacles to-day, and political *impasse* is one of them. The Government, the Congress, the Muslim League all need our prayer. Pray that the leaders of all parties may remove the hindrances to co-operation and give themselves unselfishly to solve them. It is only by united endeavour that India's problems can be solved, whether they are political or economic.

"This requires a change of heart in all, and change of heart can come by prayer. Here I speak of the millions of people in this land. India for ages has been known to be instinctively religious. Political controversies, economic rivalry, material prosperity have, however, in past years tended to weaken faith in God and the sense of the reality of the Unseen. Pray that our people will have their eyes opened to see in Christ the only Saviour for all India's ills. And then pray for the Church in India. We thank God for its growth, but mourn for the divisions which separate us. They cause the outsider

to say, 'You cannot proclaim Christ with one voice.' The unity of the Church, by which the world was to recognise Christ, is simply not seen. The Indian situation calls for the Church's powerful witness to the crucified and risen Lord as the reconciler of man with man, of man with God. And yet we ourselves are divided. Pray that we may be friends. Pray that we may become united and endowed with power from on high for the tasks that lie before us. We are praying. Brethren, pray for that."

The British Council of Churches announces that £2,500 has been sent to the National Christian Council of India for famine relief, as a result of a recent appeal made by the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, and the Moderator of the Free Church Federal Council.

HOME CLERGY SHARE WORK FOR FORCES WITH SERVICE CHAPLAINS

A recent number of *Spiritual Issues* (No. 202) contained an item which has caused considerable interest, headed "Chaplains write of present progress and concern for the future." In it a Service chaplain contrasted his intimate relationship with his men to the normal relationships of a parson with his peace-time congregation. "It's a *parson* who confronts them in the pulpit," he wrote, "and he doesn't share their life or their dangers and insecurities."

An American reader felt that this did less than justice to the splendid work done for the Forces by clergy who are *not* chaplains, and he gave us an account of "one parson's" work in this realm. We are glad to print it, as a recognition of the great work done by clergy and ministers for the Forces on both sides of the Atlantic. His work, he tells us, includes:—

"1. General letters sent out to nearly 200 men on our prayer and honour roll.

"2. Special correspondence with a large number of these in individual letters.

"3. Sending of books like Fosdick's 'On Being a Real Person,' to help steady those whose mental equilibrium is in danger.

"4. Special groups invited to dinner. We are having 25 or 30 of the Pine Camp boys to-morrow night.

"5. Co-operation with chaplains in doing everything possible that they request.

"6. Sponsoring special meetings to bring courage to our boys in local camp, as last Sunday night, when a brigadier-general ad-

ressed an audience in our church of over 600, with three Army chaplains and a major-general present in the service.

"7. Running a regular rental bureau (free) to help soldiers' wives and families find some place to stay in this terribly overcrowded military-defence population centre.

"8. Personal interviews.

"One might paraphrase the movie title, 'All of this and hell besides'; for with the upset of our community, the dislocation of families, the curtailment of activities due to gas and food rationing, mothers working and the extra load of juvenile delinquency, the general letting down of morals—all of these and other difficulties too numerous to mention enter into the lives of earnest pastors, many of them too old for chaplains' service. And they deserve something more than 'just parsons.'"

"BLESSING" A DESTROYER— COMMANDER'S VIEW OF ITS EFFECT

An English Bishop recently "blessed" a new destroyer before it put to sea. Writing to the Bishop to thank him for taking the service, the Commanding Officer gave his views to the value of the service.

"I am quite sure," he wrote, "that the service of blessing has a very real effect on the spirit and bearing of all of us on board.

"You might be interested in an argument which I had with a man in civil life, who wanted to know did I really believe that a service like that did any good? Could it, he asked, prevent a bomb or torpedo hitting the ship and sinking her?

"I did my best against his materialistic views. I have known times of stress when a decision is called for—two courses, apparently equally good, are open. There does not seem to be anything to choose between them, but a choice must be made.

"Suddenly one *knows* what to do. The decision does not spring from any conscious mental process, it comes as a conviction, which I myself call Heavenly guidance. Later on one may, and generally does, realise how disastrous the opposite course would have been. The service of blessing is, I think, an act of faith.

"I write this in humble thankfulness, and I hope that you may remember this ship which you have blessed."

R.A.F. WING BUILDS "PARISH CHURCH" IN AFRICA

A Wellington night-bomber wing in North Africa now has its own "parish church."

The church consists of two tents fronted by an old Arab archway on which stands a wooden cross.

When it was decided to provide a church for all the airmen of the wing, whatever their religious denomination, a church council representative of all the squadrons was formed and the work was begun. One unit undertook to make the altar and another made itself responsible for the Communion rail which has been constructed from wood taken from wrecked enemy vehicles.

Two 25-lb. shell cases serve as altar vases flanking a wooden cross made by a craftsman from one of the Wellington squadrons. The same unit also provided the cross which surmounts the archway. The sandy floor of the church was lowered by nearly two feet in order to secure more head room, steps were cut and the floor was carpeted with pieces of canvas. The choir stalls were made from old flare boxes, and cut-down bomb boxes have been used for seating accommodation.

This miniature church is complete even to the organ, which was bought with subscriptions given by the airmen.

The building is used for Bible classes, Toc H meetings and occasional classical concerts as well as for church services.

"THE NORWEGIAN CHURCH TO-DAY"

"The Chief of the Quisling Church Dept., Dean Sigmund Feyling, has written a pamphlet (in Swedish) with the above title, which has recently been widely distributed in Sweden, chiefly to the clergy. The pamphlet is printed in Berlin.

"Feyling's chief thesis is that the Norwegian Church conflict is of a purely political character. The name of religion has been invoked 'to lead those circles in Norway who are interested in religion against the party and the national Government.' In all the unprecedented 'encroachments which have been directed against the Norwegian Church and its members' during these last years, Feyling sees only 'the judiciary's natural reaction against legal offences, strikes and sabotage.' As 'the most dangerous attempt at sabotage' he instances the events in Trondheim on February 1st, 1942, when the Dean, he writes, was not successful in preventing the service of celebration, which was arranged on the occasion of the Minister Resident's assumption of office, 'the Dean arranged a new High Mass in the Cathedral immediately after the festival service. This forced the authorities to intervene. Church

order was endangered here. The political opposition service was forbidden, and the Dean dismissed.' In actual fact it was the festival service which had a political character, marked out by the black banners of the Hird with the Sun Cross and NS red and gold colours in the choir. The service announced by Dean Fjellbu, which the authorities tried to prevent by the use of the police, was the ordinary High Mass and Communion.

"Feyling's interpretation of the events in Trondheim is symptomatic of his incapacity to see what the Norwegian Church conflict really means. Such a priest is he, that he is completely incapable of seeing that the fight of the Norwegian Church is spiritual. He himself falls victim to the complaint of which he wrongly accuses the Church's representatives; mixing religion and politics. He also threatens his opponents with stronger measures by the power of the State: the present 'period of moderation' can end! No victory has ever been won by such means in a fight about spiritual realities."

—Nils Karlström, in *Kristen Gemenskap* (Sweden), September, 1943.

SWISS BOOK COLLECTION FOR PRISONERS OF WAR

The Swiss paper, *La Vie Protestante* (October 22nd), writes:—

"In the canton of Vaud this collection has had considerable success, thanks particularly to the support of the civil and ecclesiastical authorities. The Department of Public Instruction organised a day in the schools; the Synodal Committees of the National and Free Churches, together with German, English and Italian speaking pastors, sponsored two days in the churches. Catholic and Protestant Youth Organisations made a parallel effort, and put their members at the disposal of those responsible for collecting the books.

"By adding together the known results of the drive in the canton the approximate total is calculated to be 145,000 volumes, weighing 45 tons, of which 15 tons were unusable and had to be sent for wastepaper.

"In some cases people have given books which they particularly valued, or have bought new books which they have given."

A JAPANESE REASON FOR OPPOSING CHRISTIANITY

Robert Bellaire writes as follows in the U.S.A. magazine *Collier's* (November 26th,

1943), in an article entitled "'Christianity Must Go,' says Japan":—

"The Japanese have another practical reason for fighting Christianity. Christianity is a religion of hope. Christianity teaches that there is a day of reckoning for evil. To millions of helpless natives of the Orient, whom Japan hopes to shackle in eternal and hopeless slavery, Christianity has given faith in eventual delivery.

"Jan Tsuchiya, Japanese Foreign Office propagandist in China, once told me the Chinese could never be permanently subdued while Christians were able to preach their doctrine of faith and hope. 'We have tried brutality,' he said, 'and we have tried friendly propaganda. We get nowhere, largely because too many Chinese have been told there inevitably will be a Christian day of reckoning for us. That is the nonsense we Japanese must silence if we hope to remain here. That is why Tokyo has ordered me to direct all my efforts against Christianity.'"

TWO SIGNIFICANT PAMPHLETS

The Christian and World Problems is the title of a pamphlet issued by the International Friendship Department of the British Council of Churches, which discusses the practical implication of Christian principles in regard to these problems without making pronouncements on disputable points or technical questions for which the Churches can claim no special competence. It aims at setting Christian minds at work upon such urgent problems as Economic Co-operation, Security and Armaments, Minorities, the Future of the Axis Powers, Empire and Colonies, and Russia. On each subject questions are given to stimulate study and discussion.

Copies (price 7d. post free) can be obtained from 56 Bloomsbury Street, London, W.C.1.

What is the part which the Churches can take in Post-War Relief and Reconstruction? What opportunities will there be for men and women of goodwill? How can Christian people enlist for service abroad or give help in other ways? These questions are answered in a pamphlet *Relief and Reconstruction* (price 4d.) also issued by the British Council of Churches. Details are given here of the opportunities which may be open and of the necessary qualifications for service.

Attention is also drawn to the special task of British Churches in helping to reconstruct Christian Churches, constitutions and movements in Europe and the Far East.